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SUBJECT CDU and LDP Reactions to Cancellation of Elections;
LDP May Retire from Political Scene

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DDA Memo, 4 Apr 77

1. SED authorities made plans in August 1948 for the holding of a Volksrat rally in Leipzig at the time of the Leipzig Fair. They announced, furthermore, without the knowledge of those concerned, that, in addition to Wilhelm Pieck, Dr. Hermann Kastner (LDP) and Otto Nuschke (CDU) would speak at the rally.
2. Following this announcement, SNE reported that Marshal Sokolovsky had decreed the cancellation of the elections scheduled for the fall of 1948. Arthur Lieutenant of the LDP zonal committee immediately applied to the SMA for an interview. The Russians refused to grant it, pointing out that Lieutenant had recently, on several occasions, "misinformed the public which had been entrusted to his care". Lieutenant thereupon contacted the zonal leaders of the CDU and suggested that Nuschke attempt to persuade the Russians to see him, together with Lieutenant. The CDU leaders felt, however, that such a move would be futile in view of the fact that the SMA was the instigator of the campaign calling for the postponement of the elections.
3. The CDU and LDP leaders also discussed the participation of Nuschke and Kastner in the Volksrat rally. Lieutenant was of the opinion that both Kastner and Nuschke should decline to serve as speakers. He argued that since the SED had made all arrangements for the rally, the SMA could not take offense at such a move. Nuschke, however, felt that the party representatives should attend, especially since the rally was to be held in the name of the Volksrat, and not merely in the name of the Antifa bloc. He declared that the bourgeois parties could not afford to offend the Volksrat, since it was "the only organization which has resisted absorption of Communist doctrines". Although a meeting of the LDP zonal executive committee was called, no concrete decisions were reached, partly because several members were unable to attend, since they had been called away from Berlin.
4. The Lieutenant faction of the LDP zonal committee is of the opinion that the party convention at Eisenach, scheduled for September, may be cancelled. If the convention is held, the faction feels that a resolution will be passed to abandon for the present all political work in the Russian Zone of Germany--i.e. to dissolve the party temporarily.
5. Reports from LDP Land officials indicate that the SMA is tightening its grip on local groups and party workers. All political speeches, circulars, and press releases must be submitted to branches of the several Ministries of the Interior for approval.

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